CLAY GEERDES' COMIX WAVE 126
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P. O. Box 7094, Berkeley, CA 94707. World Rights Reserved. Artwork and material herein © the artists concerned. Used here for promotional purposes only. $10 for the next twelve issues. $42 pp for a complete set of back issues. Checks to Clay Geerdes.

There is a great deal of corruption in the comic business these days and one finds it at the top as well as the bottom. The majors have set out to cheat the young fan-collector and could only succeed with the complicity of the retailers. I just saw a comic book title with five different first issues, all of them numbered 1. Each has a different cover and story. In the past few years we have seen comic books presented in numerous formats designed to relieve the young chump of his lunch money. A single issue of a comic with four different covers so the collector has to buy the same comic four times or suffer the humility of having an incomplete collection. Comics with all kinds of gimmicks from book paper to holographic covers push the profits higher while the same old crapola resides between the covers.

Dealers accept all this bullshit and play ball with it. A platinum covered Spiderman was sent only to dealers and they are now claiming it is worth $350. What horseshit. Since only dealers got the comic, it was an obvious payoff, and they can charge the collector anything they like. It will be $3500 when the next Guide comes out.

It's logical for dealers to buy low and sell high. But when dealers deliberately hold back contemporary comics they know will be in demand so they can inflate the back issue price, this is nothing but price gouging, ripping off the customer. None of the books that are in the bins are rare. Most have printings far over 100,000, and historically, nothing with that large a print run has ever held its value. Rare is rare and what we are seeing in the nineties is manipulated scarcity. If the fans show an interest in a certain character, what do the dealers do? They quadruple the back issue price on those books that feature the character even if he had nothing but a cameo appearance. At the major conventions, dealers get together at Trade shows and make the best deals with each other so there are very few bargains available when the regular fans are allowed into the dealer's room a week later. For a decade or more there was a tacit agreement among those in the business to accept the Overstreet Price Guide as the criteria for grading and pricing comic books, but I have found my local stores charging a lot more than Overstreet when it suits them. On the other hand when I go in to sell or make a trade, they deal with me using Overstreet.

What choice does the fan have? In most communities, there is one comic store and you either deal with the owner or you don't. You can deal through the mail, and you may be lucky and you may not be. One person's Very Good may be someone else's Fine or even Poor. Grading is still according to whim in many parts of the country in spite of Overstreet's special grade book.

Underground collecting never really got off the ground. There are a handful of collectors around the country and all of us in undergrounds know who and where they are. Frankly, there are more than enough copies of the rarest underground books for all who want them. I can think of one or two exceptions, but not many. I suspect there are more Plymell and Donahue ZAPS around than there are people who want to buy them. There are probably more newave and minicomic collectors than underground collectors. Why? Underground comix were verboten to kids, the seminal collectors. Some grew up reading them on the sly but they had to keep them hidden from the big adult eye and what kid collector wants a collection he can't show off to his buddies?

I'm really upset to see how corrupt the business is becoming. I think the industry manipulation of issue numbers is totally corrupt and that dealers who have given in to the deceitful practices of the Eastern comixopolies are no better than unions who have sold out to management. A comic book store should look out for the young fan collector and guide him toward a collection that will have some real value in the future, not participate in a fraud that will leave him with a lot of worthless *number ones*.

Ever had this experience. You go in and buy a back issue of a title and you pay the high price and accept the clerk's explanation that the title is rare and gee, you're lucky you found one. A few days later you take the same title back and ask another clerk in the same store what he will give you in cash or trade for the book. He offers you practically nothing for the book and tells you they have too many copies of it. A few days ago it was a rare copy and you were lucky to be able to pay the store ten or fifteen bucks for it, now you are hearing that the store has too many copies and they might give you a couple of bucks in trade. So they have a case of those "rare" books on a shelf in the back and they lie about it to make a thousand per cent profit.

Berkeley's comic book and used paperback stores are no different in this game. I have quit buying paperbacks from any of them. I used to enjoy the game of buying and trading, but lately I've been bummed out too often. I will buy a mystery or novel with the understanding that I will read it and return it for a percentage of trade. Just the other day I went into a bookstore on Solano to get trade on a book I decided I didn't like. It was looked over as though it were a dogturd casually placed in the buyer's hand and he said he couldn't take it. Oh, why not? It wasn't in good enough shape. That's interesting. It was in good enough shape for the store to sell it to me the previous day for a couple of bucks. That was the last straw for me with that store. As far as I am concerned, they threw away a long term customer for 75¢ trade. With comic books I've had the experience of doing a trade for x amount based on a grading of, let's say, Fine, and a few days later I see my former book on sale upgraded to VG. Well, that may be *just business*, but in my mind I have been cheated by the dealer.

RUDOLF ISING
[1904-1992]

Rudolf Ising died in July. He was 88. Ising started with Disney in Kansas City in the twenties and went on to help Hugh Harmon form the cartoon unit at Warner Brothers. He worked on the **BOSCO** series which is currently a bit clandestine since Bosco was a little black boy a la Sambo and this type of material is now considered racist. The L. A **TIMES** obit said Bosco was the first animated film to synchronize movement and speech. Not so. This was done by Disney in **STEAMBOAT WILLIE** in 1928. Warner's issued the first sound film, Jolson's **THE JAZZ SINGER**, in 1927, but it wasn't an animated cartoon.

A comic book and **Star Trek Show** at the San Jose Civic Auditorium August 29 and 30, 1992. Scotty Doohan will be the guest along with Marvel's Johnny Romita and son. Info from 510-222-8663.

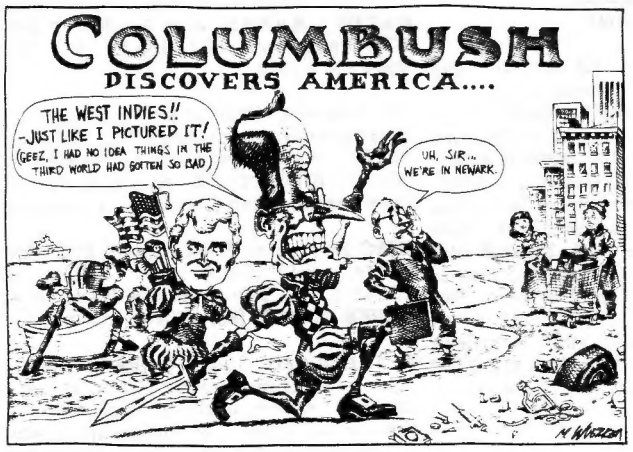
Two new minicomix from Bruce Stengl. **SATIN SATAN** and **RABBITBOY**. 50¢/Stamp each. 633 King St., #13, Santa Rosa, CA 95404.

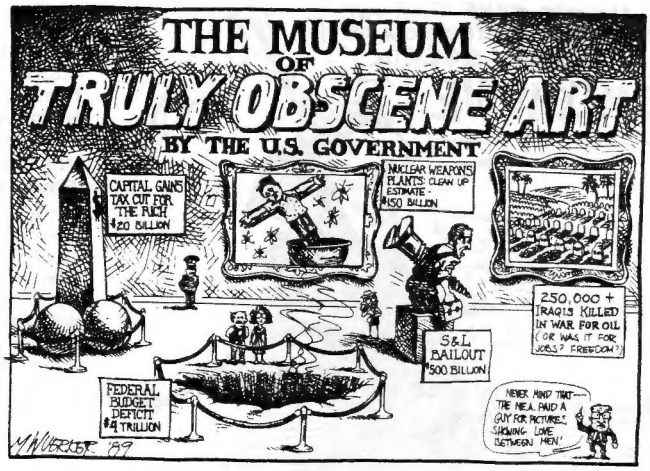
EL VIBORA 150 is $10 pp from J. M. Berengueuer, Plaza Beatas 3, Barcelona, Spain. Some new work by Nazario and others. **KISS COMIX 9** is $10. Cover by Dave Stevens. Same address. Adults only.

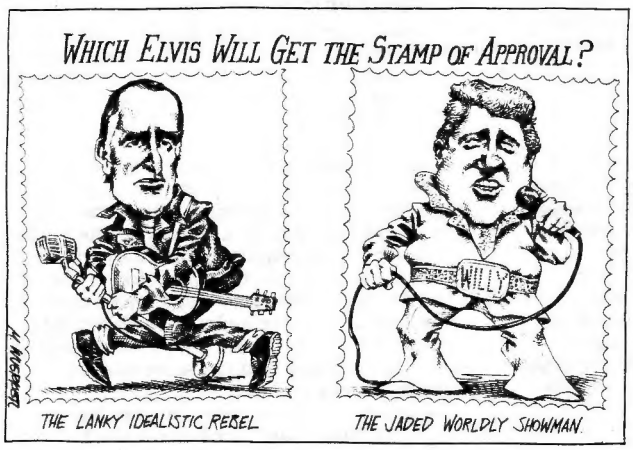
MISC 38 is $1.50 & .52 postage from Randy Paske, 4841 Birch Lane, Gilbert, MN 55741-8213. The coverless issue of **ALL COVER COMICS [#6]** is 25¢ & 29¢ post.

In **YAHOO #6**, Susan Catherine tells the story of a stripper's life. Joe Sacco did the artwork. A very accurate description of the sex bar scene. The topless scene was in full bloom in the early seventies when I was writing columns for the Los Angeles **FREE PRESS** and **COAST** and I used to make the rounds to get the latest news. Broadway is now mostly upscale yuppie restaurants and there is a little of the sex scene there as there is Beat culture. Que le temp passe vite.

WHEN OLIVE OYL tried to assert her independence in a veiled reference to abortion rights Bobby London, the artist who draws her, got the boot. London, who draws the daily "Popeye" comic strip for King Features, says the company told him last week he was being fired for submitting a sequence in which Olive asserts her right to choose. Olive, Popeye's longtime love, is not pregnant in the cartoons. Rather, she receives a baby Bluto doll unsolicited in the mail and she and Popeye discuss returning it using phrases such as "send this baby back to its maker." Two priests overhear them and, believing the subject is abortion, try to rally people against Olive Oyl. "She tells them she can do what she wants to do, because it's her life," London said.

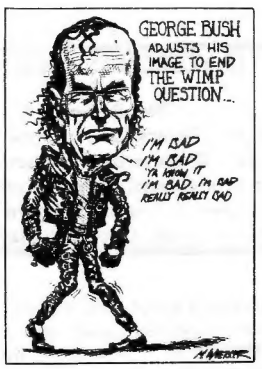

COLUMBUSH
DISCOVERS AMERICA....
THE WEST INDIES!! -JUST LIKE I PICTURED IT! (GEEZ, I HAD NO IDEA THINGS IN THE THIRD WORLD HAD GOTTEN SO BAD)
UH, SIR... WE'RE IN NEWARK.
M. WUERKER


THE MUSEUM OF TRULY OBSCENE ART
BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT
CAPITAL GAINS TAX CUT FOR THE RICH $20 BILLION
NUCLEAR WEAPONS PLANTS CLEAN UP ESTIMATE - $150 BILLION
250,000 + IRAQIS KILLED IN WAR FOR OIL (OR WAS IT FOR JOBS? FREEDOM?)
S&L BAILOUT $500 BILLION
FEDERAL BUDGET DEFICIT $4 TRILLION
NEVER MIND THAT-- THE NEA PAID A GUY FOR PICTURES SHOWING LOVE BETWEEN MEN!
M. WUERKER '89

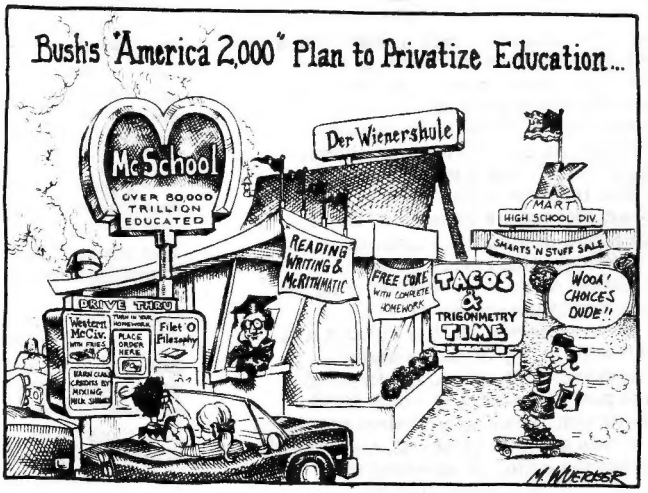


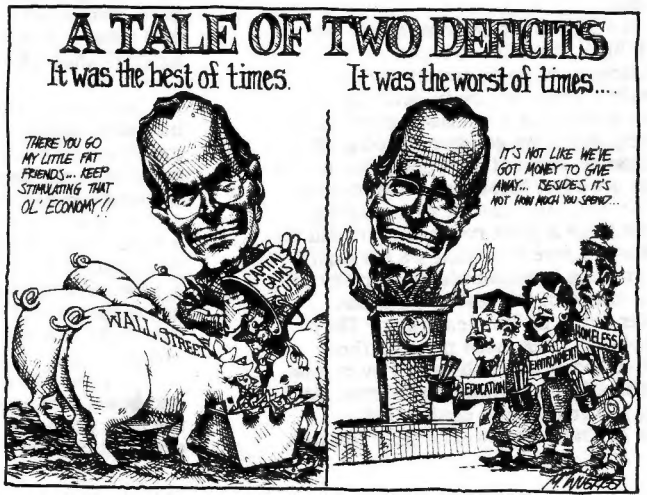
A COLLECTION OF MATT WUERKER'S BEST

The political cartoons around this page are from Matt Wuerker's **STANDING TALL IN DEEP DOO-DOO.** I've enjoyed Matt's work for several years in **Z Magazine** and have his 1992 calendar on my wall. Matt is to the nineties what Ron Cobb was to the sixties. Ask for this book at your local dealer.



THERE YOU GO AGAIN! TURNING TRICKS FOR THOSE DARN SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS!!
BIG MONEY
BIG BIZ
MILITARY INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX
M. WUERKER




A TALE OF TWO DEFICITS
It was the best of times.
It was the worst of times....
THERE YOU GO MY LITTLE FAT FRIENDS... KEEP STIMULATING THAT OL' ECONOMY!!
CAPITAL GAINS CUT
WALL STREET
IT'S NOT LIKE WE'VE GOT MONEY TO GIVE AWAY... BESIDES, IT'S NOT HOW MUCH YOU SPEND...
HOMELESS
EDUCATION
ENVIRONMENT
M. WUERKER